

## NEGROES AND RELIGION.

## THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH AT THE SOUTH.

NEGROES AND RELIGION.—We have not met lately a richer piece of satire than the following from the New York Tribune. A General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church was lately held in Philadelphia which probably suggested the important facts so naively embodied in this article. Another question which came before this body, says the Tribune, was this "which has already proved so embarrassing to many of our American church organizations—the question to wit, whether a Christian brother, communicant, perhaps Deacon or Presbyter, who happens to be black—or if not decided black, to have a portion, more or less, of African blood in his veins—the question whether such a Christian brother and communicant is fit to be believed upon oath."

This is indeed no question in the Southern Church. It without exception so far as we know decides that church members of the oppressed class though good Christians, and worthy of church fellowship, even with the patriarchs, are not to be believed on their oath before a church judicatory. The Methodist Episcopal Church, more fortunate than her Protestant Episcopal sister long ago settled her general policy on this question, by decreeing the reception of such testimony by the ecclesiastical courts, as the civil courts admit in the States when trials take place. A most happy method at once of submitting to and fostering public sentiment whether right or wrong. To this facile spirit of accommodation to public sentiment is attributable the popular character of our churches.

## MEMORIAL.

To the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America:

RIGHT REVEREND AND REVEREND FATHERS AND BROTHERS:

We pray leave to address you on a subject of the profoundest interest to our beloved Church, and particularly to her Southern Dioceses. The inscrutable decrees of Providence have committed to us the charge in things spiritual as well as temporal of the colored population, among several millions in number, who are domiciled among us. You know with what pious vigilance and devout fidelity our Zion has cherished and protected these black and yellow lambs of the flock, striving ever to keep them from going astray and to make them daily more abundant in good works. We have indeed labored without ceasing, and not wholly in vain, to make those thus entrusted to our Christian rule, good and faithful servants; sparing no means that could promote their goodly endeavor. To keep them from perishing on an unchristian world, we have devoted ourselves the happiness of sharing with them our stores of profane knowledge, and have made it a felony to teach them to read. That they might not be hindered in running the race that is set before them, we have forbidden them to clutter themselves with worldly goods, and to retain even the fruits of their daily labor, and we have ourselves borne the added burden without complaining. The task of mortifying the flesh and bringing it into subjection, which even the great apostle of the gentiles was compelled to perform for himself, we have taken off their hands and performed for them. That they might learn not to set their hearts on things of this world, (which passeth away like a shadow,) we have ordained that their domestic life should be transient, and that they, with or without their wives and children, be kept in free circulation as the basis of trade. And we have labored generally, in the spirit of Christian love, to assimilate them to that order of created beings which is designated in Holy Writ as superior even to the favored people of old, for that it "knoweth its master."

And thus we may say, without boasting, that the Christian graces of humility, long-suffering, and submission to wrong (in difficult of attainment) are nowhere manifested on a larger scale than by this generation, though by nature stiff-necked and untractable. And it is indeed a blessed thought that these blessed millions, who might at this day have been leading with their families about them, in continued degradation,

and howling down from Mount Zion, or Babel, or that hideous idol, Ben-Ghion-Jumbo, now sit under the light of Evangelical truth and Apostolic order, and shine on their own homes, and where they daily learn that all help in adversity comes from God alone, and not from man.

But to make the system of the Church more self-consistent and harmonious, and to adapt her ministrations to these tender lambs of her flock and to Southern Churches, we hold certain changes in her liturgy and discipline to be indispensable.

Our attention to this subject has been especially awakened by the introduction during your present session at Philadelphia of a "Canon" absurdly misnamed "Discipline," so ignorantly and mischievously framed, (in the face of the actual malignity of purpose) that under its pious provisions, a dozen or more millions (not to say negro) communicants, if unfortunately eye-witnesses of the commission of a crime by a deacon or presbyter, might have been admitted to testify to the fact, and thus to subvert the whole social and political fabric of Virginia or South Carolina. Though this insane and unchristian novelty (which disturbed our peace) was promptly rejected by the unanimous Southern vote, the mere fact that it was put forward is enough to suggest gloomy forebodings, and entitles us to demand of the Church securities of the future, and such changes in her Ritual and Order as shall suit both to Southern institutions. Can it be doubted that communicants not credible under oath require a special liturgy?

It is to be observed that the whole Prayer-book is intended for homogeneous congregations of responsible beings capable of forming domestic ties and enjoying personal rights. It is, therefore, as a whole, unfit for the colored people, who are now the free citizens—assemblages composed in varying proportions of two classes of Christians, one of which bought the other yesterday, and may sell it to-morrow.

But, waiving this for the present, certain prominent details require immediate change.

For example, the promise and vow of the marriage service—"I, M., take thee, K., to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold 'till death do us part," is a mockery when uttered by one of this beloved but subordinate race. We cannot bear thus to put sacred words into the mouths of those so dear to us. It should be amended to read: "till death, or my owner, his executors, administrators or assignees do us part." So, too, the demand—"Wilt thou, K., keep thee only unto him so long as ye both shall live," and the answer "I will," should be improved by adding to the words "I will," some form of protest reserving the legal rights of the owner, present or future, of either party, with which the voice of the Church expressed in the present service seems to conflict. This apparent conflict is still more painfully conspicuous where the officiating clergyman is required to say: "Those whom God hath put together let no man put asunder." Volumes of fanaticism and unbelief are latent in these few words.—Where the officiating clergyman himself owns either the bride or bridegroom, this solemnity might be construed (most unreasonably but with some plausibility) as in some sense adopting him from any future exercise of his rights as a Christian and a patriarch, even at considerable pecuniary loss. In every case it is made the mouth-piece of a revolutionary doctrine, that blackness the rights of property and distinctly implies the existence of that Anti-Christian fiction, a "Higher Law."

Such profane utterances may suit the atmosphere of other communities, but with Christians and Freemen, and every social corruption. But no church that openly proclaims them can flourish within our borders.

Another remedy is submitted which may allow

of our loving this service (so touching and beautiful when used in its proper place) (unabridged for the present. Since the Church hath inherent power to loose as well as to bind, your Honorable Body may in its wisdom create and establish a fourth subordinate order of the Ministry, specially to exercise the function of blessing, and to administer the Rite of Divorce from time to time with due solemnity to colored couples who have been married in the usual form. The fourth order might be styled that of sub-Deacons, Acolytes, Exorcists, Hagiarchs, or simply Acolytes. Any person experienced in the duties of that useful calling, and apt and meet for his smartness and godly conversation to exercise that ministry duly for the edifying of the Church," should be ordained by the Bishop for this particular office—to which other minor duties might judiciously be added. For these, useful hints may lawfully be borrowed from the experience of another and ancient branch of the Church—and we refer to the "Discipline of the Order of Hagiarchs," (Discipline of Regular Order of Hagiarchs, A.D. 1557)—as embodying practical suggestions of some value. A suitable "Form of ordaining Acolytes" should stand in the Prayer-Book immediately after that for obtaining Deacons. A testatory synchism would dictate the presentation of a hammer to the candidate by the Bishop (as the New Testament is delivered to the newly ordained Deacon), with the solemn words: "Take thou authority to divorce colored persons in the Church at public or private sale, for cash or on credit, and also to knock them down if thou be thereto licensed by the Bishop himself." There should be also an appropriate solemn service introductory to such sales; concluding with a suitable exhortation to the parties.

The Rite of Confirmation, or laying on of hands, also needs regulating. For the avoiding of scandal, persons of African descent must be specially repelled from that ordinance. The peace of Jerusalem must be disturbed if Episcopal hands are still to be brought into physical contact with the heads of these dear children of the Church except in the way of paternal chastisement. What ever benefit these black but precious vessels may derive from Confirmation would be far outweighed by the damage the Church would sustain if a clerical and impulsive public should visit one of her chief ministers with the dignity of tar and feathers for demeaning himself to administer it.

The toasts, too, contains phrases that tend to mischief—the prayer, for instance, to be delivered "from hardness of heart and contempt of Thy Word and commandments," and that "all Christian rulers and magistrates may have grace to create justice and maintain truth." Properly understood, these are, of course prayers that we may not fall into the delusion of imagining ourselves bound to mitigate the severity and brutality (false as so-called) of our civilly humane and evangelical "Slave Code," and that the civil authority may be strengthened to maintain and develop it to the end of time. But these supplications have been known to stir up distressing doubts and misgivings in disaffected and over-sensitive consciences. The prayer for "all who are desolate and oppressed" seems to us unsuitably to persons in the position, that its use can no longer be tolerated.

The service for the burial of the dead needs comparatively little change to adapt it to Southern institutions. But in the passage "Forasmuch as the life of man is short, and the time of his pilgrimage on earth is but a shadow, and the last day of his journey is at hand," the last-quoted three words are unmeaning, offensive to our instincts, and in conflict with the great fundamental ideas of our social system. "This deceased," or "this departed individual black man," or words to that effect should be substituted. In the solemn offices of religion ought unreal should be avoided.

There are radical defects in the "Prayer for the sick person," and the "Office for the visitation of the sick." Both are inappropriate to the case of sickness occurring among these colored objects of our love. Both assume that the patient, and not the proprietor of the patient is the person chiefly interested in the patient's recovery. The Church's obligation is to the former alone. She stands coldly away from the sorrow and trial of the owner, without a single prayer that he be spared the loss or enabled to bear it with resignation; though it may reduce him from the estate of a free man to that of a slave, or to labor for his subsistence. Should this be so?

Fearing to weary you by pointing out specifically all the additions and changes which the Prayer-book requires, we pause here—only hinting at a few further questions too important to be overlooked.

Should not provision be made (according to the ingenious suggestions of a distinguished Northern Churchman), in cases where a parish church needs repair or enlargement, for raising the necessary funds by the sale of a sufficient number of colored communicants?

Should not the want (at present so deeply felt) of children be supplied by the adoption of orphans of the colored race, and the introduction of education and intelligence, be at once supplied?

Can the present mode of collecting alms at the altars be improved as to enable charitable Christians, anxious to give abundant alms of the substance of their hearts, to do so in a more judicious medium, to slip a colored person or persons into the alms-dish, without unseemly noise and confusion?

Should not a communicant service, like that of the Anglican Church, or a form of cursing and excommunication (in the nature of a judicial composition attributed to Erasmus), be inserted into the Prayer-book for the warning and intimidation of black Christians who may be tempted by Satan to think of unlawful emigration toward the ungenial regions of the North?

In view of the vast distinction between ourselves and the class in question, from which we have abstracted all the attributes of humanity which can be affected by human legislation, is it not meet and right that a change be made in our present Communion Service, the Roman Church administers the sacrament to the laity in one kind only. Would it not be consistent with the true spirit of our institutions to administer the same to colored communicants in neither kind only.

We submit these grave points for your deliberation, and ask for such prompt action upon them as the peace of the Church, and vindication of the rights of Southern gentlemen and Christians.

And your memorialists will ever pray, &c.

Charleston, S. C., Oct. 1, 1856.

A DEMOCRATIC REVEL.—On Wednesday night last a few of the Democrats of Salem, reinforced by some of their comrades from New Lisbon and Canfield held a drunken revel in Salem; making night hideous with their curses—their ribald jests and their heartless scoffings at the sufferings and outrages of their fellow-citizens in Kansas and at all who have the humanity to sympathize with them. They freely expressed their hearty sympathy with the slaveholders and their diabolical acts and hatred of his victims. These orgies were performed in honor of the supposed success of the national ruffians, who propose to sustain slaveholding and slavery extension as the primary objects of our Government; and such men are fit agents for such a work and worthy allies of the ruffians of Missouri and Washington.

THE ELECTION.—At the time of going to press we have enough of the election returns to make it certain that Fremont is defeated. Buchanan is probably elected, though it is not certain. The New England States, New York, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois are said to be for Fremont. All the other States are assigned to Buchanan, except Kentucky and Maryland which are reported Fillmore.

MASSACHUSETTS.—Gardner is elected Governor and the whole Republican delegation returned to Congress.

The proposed new Bank Law for Ohio was defeated at the late State election.

Why the Slaveholders wanted Buchanan Elected.—The New Orleans Delta recently gave the following as its reasons for desiring the election of Buchanan:

"Mr. Buchanan's election would be little more than a legend, but for the pledges he has given in the Oregon letter, and in his endorsement of the Cincinnati platform. The South, under his Administration, would have four years longer for preparation. She would have time to strengthen her outposts, placing Kansas, for one, on one flank, and Cuba on the other, with a valuable rallying point in Nicaragua."

THE QUAKER MISSION ABANDONED.—The Quaker Mission in Kansas since its sack by the border ruffians, has been abandoned and the establishment is left untenanted. A farm and boarding school have been there successfully conducted for several years, for the benefit of the Shawnee Indians, by the Yearly Meetings of Indiana, Ohio and Baltimore.

BINGHAM'S MAJORITY.—We stated that Bingham's majority was upwards of 900. That was his majority in this county. The vote in the district was:

Bingham, 9,444

Woods, 9,933

Bingham's Majority, 2,511

## News of the Week.

A Russian business line lately been fined a thousand dollars for forging and swindling.

Lola Montes will shortly retire from the stage. It is said that she has recently become deeply interested in religious subjects.

In Austria there are 10,000 midwives and only 6,389 physicians.

The canals which were introduced in Texas are said to be doing finely, and are well adapted to the frontier service, for which they were designed.

THE MORMONS IN DENMARK.—Mormonism is said to be making such progress in Denmark as to cause the religious and political authorities of the Kingdom, praying that a stop may be put to the exercise of a most baneful influence on the peasantry and lower classes, who are exclusively to be found among the converts. Several petitions have been sent to the Government from different parts of the Kingdom, praying that a stop may be put to the exercise of a most baneful influence on the peasantry and lower classes, who are exclusively to be found among the converts. Several petitions have been sent to the Government from different parts of the Kingdom, praying that a stop may be put to the exercise of a most baneful influence on the peasantry and lower classes, who are exclusively to be found among the converts. 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